

Well, that could be really good news for the United States of America and U.S. manufacturing because those are great middle-class manufacturing jobs. But guess what. Those jobs are not secure. The Brazilians want to build airplanes. The Europeans already build airplanes. The Chinese want to build airplanes. They are all competing for that rising middle-class market that is demanding new airplanes. They all want to get in the action of having manufacturing jobs in their states.

So we need to make sure we implement the Export-Import Bank, which is about to expire on September 30 of this year. Without the Export-Import Bank, we are going to be hobbling businesses across the United States of America and not giving them these tools.

The Export-Import Bank has created thousands of jobs in the United States of America. It has increased exports by \$37 billion and helped small businesses and created jobs. It also helps us pay down the Federal deficit. It has generated over \$1.057 billion returned to the U.S. Treasury. So it has actually helped us pay down the Federal debt. So my colleagues who are now all of a sudden either having amnesia on why they supported the Ex-Im Bank or not coming forward to support it now need to remember what a vital tool this is to the U.S. economy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Ms. CANTWELL. I ask unanimous consent for another 30 seconds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. CANTWELL. I want to close by saying that other countries use these same financial tools. So a lot of my colleagues can see that other countries, for the same reason, when the marketplace does not provide a private sector financial tool to securitize these products—it is important that the United States stay competitive with everybody chasing global market opportunities.

Let's not hobble U.S. manufacturing. Let's get the Export-Import Bank out of committee and reauthorized.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions is discharged from further consideration of H.R. 803 and the Senate will proceed to the measure, which the clerk will report by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 803) to reform and strengthen the workforce investment system of the Nation to put Americans back to work and make the United States more competitive in the 21st century.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 2:30 shall be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, for the next several hours we will be moving to a bill that the Senator from Washington, Mrs. MURRAY, and the Senator from Georgia, Mr. ISAKSON, have had the principal role in fashioning. They will have a chance to talk about that. In just a few minutes the chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, Senator HARKIN, will proceed with the bill. But before that happens, I wish to take 3 or 4 minutes to talk about the importance of what is happening here.

In 1998 Congress passed a sort of "GI bill" for workers. The idea was to do what is at the top of every Governor's agenda in every State right now: How can we help more Americans get the job skills to fit the jobs?

When I was home in Granger County last weekend, the concern of Tennesseans was that it is too hard to find a job; it is too hard to keep a house; what can I do to get a job?

This legislation we are dealing with today, for the first time since 2003, reauthorizes \$9.5 billion in funds that will be spent through local workforce boards, through community colleges, and through State governments to help individuals in North Dakota, in Washington, in Tennessee, in Georgia get the job skills to find a job. This bill will make it easier for them for them to achieve that goal. It has the great advantage of not mandating how they do it from Washington but creating an environment where people can do this for themselves.

Our former Democratic Governor Phil Bredesen said to me that when he first became Governor and went to find out about the \$145 million of federal workforce development funding that comes to Tennessee, he just threw up his hands. He said: It is too complicated. I cannot do anything with it.

So he told his cabinet members: Do the best you can.

Well, working together with the House of Representatives, Senator MURRAY and Senator ISAKSON and a group of us here have taken this law that was passed 16 years ago and made some dramatic changes to it. They will tell you more about that. They will be talking about how we have taken many of the 47 work-training programs that exist in the Federal Government and simplified them, eliminating 15 programs that were ineffective or duplicative, eliminating 21 Federal mandates, streamlining multiple plans into a single State plan that reduces time spent on paperwork, streamlining reporting requirements, giving Governors more flexibility, giving local workforce boards more flexibility, and most importantly, giving the individuals who need jobs more opportunity to say: This is what I would like to do, and this is what I choose to do.

This has been no easy task. Senator MURRAY and Senator ISAKSON deserve a lot of credit from all of us because many Congresses have tried to reauthorize this law before. I am going to come back after about an hour and deliver a little more extensive discussion on this, but the 108th Congress, the 109th Congress, and the 112th Congress—all tried to do this but could not get a consensus about how to move forward. Finally, Congresswoman VIRGINIA FOXX produced the SKILLS Act in the House of Representatives. The House passed this bill in March of 2013. It came over here to the Senate. The Senate HELP Committee passed its bill last July. Led by Senator MURRAY and Senator ISAKSON, the Senate began working with the House, came up with an agreement, and, working with a number of Senators, we have reduced the number of amendments that actually have to be voted on today to two. So we will have two amendments to be voted on and then will vote on final passage. Then we will send the bill back to the House. Hopefully the President will have a chance to sign it.

I would like to say that I hope that in the midst of what is too much dysfunction in the Senate, this will be an example of what can happen when we put our minds to it.

The members of the HELP Committee, on which I am the ranking Republican, and Senator HARKIN, the ranking Democrat—we have some pretty big philosophical differences. Ideologically, we are not the same. But we have passed 19 bills out of the HELP Committee. 13 have become law this year. That is a record of accomplishment we are proud of. It shows that Senators with different opinions can come to a consensus and come to a resolve.

So let me step aside now and let those who have really done the most work on the bill speak—the Senator from Washington and the Senator from Georgia. I will be back in about an hour, and then we will be voting a little later this afternoon. This is good news for the workers of America, for the Governors who felt hamstrung by Washington, for the workforce boards who have been limited in their ability to meet the needs of local employers and workers, and for Senator COBURN, who has been a real leader in pointing out how many duplicative work programs we have. We have gone a long way in the direction he wanted us to go. I congratulate all of those Senators for the result.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

AMENDMENT NO. 3378

(PURPOSE: IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE)

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, as provided under the consent agreement, I now call up the substitute amendment No. 3378.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows: